The Computer Museum

NEWS

March/April 1989

Photo credit: Michael Chertok

A mother and son learn how to build a mobile sensing robot in the Museum's popular "Build Your Own Robot Workshop."

Robots to Go...

Ever wanted to build your own robot? That's just what adults and kids will do at the Museum's new "Build Your Own Robot Workshop" on April 16, 1989, from 10am-1pm.

Kids age 10-15 join a parent, grandparent or adult friend to assemble mobile sensing robots from kits purchased at the Museum Store. One of them, a four-legged robot called "Medusa," moves in response to sound, while the other, "Peppy," reacts to sound and obstacles.

The Education Department provides technical guidance and support. Besides becoming familiar with simple robotic technology, adults and kids get a chance to work together on a project and build confidence in themselves.

"It's great to see the satisfaction on kids' faces when they have built something on their own that actually works," says Education Coordinator Michael Chertok. Back by popular demand, this is the third of the Museum's robot building workshops.

Robot building kits are available from the Museum Store for $36.95 (members, $33.26); Workshop $15 per team, including all tools and batteries (members, $10).

Register early! Space is limited to 30 teams of (1) adult and (1) child. Each child must have an adult partner and a kit. To register: Call the Store (617) 426-2800 extension 307 during regular Museum hours. Robot kits may also be purchased for home assembly.

Behind the Stacks:

Ann Russell

Ever since the fall of 1984, researcher Ann Russell has played an important, little known role at The Computer Museum. Under Founding President Gwen Bell's direction, she has been wading through thousands of old computer periodicals, manuals, and technical reports—most of them pre-1970. Her goal is to catalog them for the museum's permanent collection.

A former elementary school teacher and "Jane of all trades" (she ran a clothing store and restaurant), Russell now lives in Boulder Creek, California, but regularly does legal research for Jortberg Associates, a Massachusetts consulting firm offering support for companies involved in patent litigation or interested in setting up their own archives.

Russell's research brought her to the Museum, an "invaluable" resource, she says. "The old manuals are often useful, if not essential, in patent litigation."

Prior to the Museum's 1984 Boston opening, she uncovered literature helpful in mounting the exhibits.

While not a regular Museum employee, "I've been made to feel part of things," she says. "That means a lot to me."

The arrangement with Jortberg is another example of how the Museum cooperates with other institutions and groups to everyone's benefit.

Photo credit: Linda Hoekamp

The friendly face peering out from behind the stacks belongs to researcher Ann Russell, a Californian who regularly visits the Museum to help organize and create a database of its documents.

Did You Know?

Photo credit: White/Packert Photography

...that when The Computer Museum is not open, your friendly Smart Machines Gallery Direction Assistant is? Whether you're lost in downtown Boston or curious about Hub geography while in Timbuktu, you can call the exhibit at (617) 357-8014 to get the quickest route between any two points on an 11-square-mile map of Boston-Cambridge.

The Direction Assistant is not accessible from outside the Museum during evening functions when the Smart Machines Gallery is open.

New Faces

Photo credit: Linda Holekamp

▲ *Greg Welch, Exhibit Developer*

Greg Welch has signed on as an Exhibit Developer for the new historical galleries, "The Milestones of Computing" and the SAGE installation. He started at the Museum in Marlboro in the summer of 1983, taking a year off from Harvard to help with the move to Boston. After he completed his thesis on Howard Aiken, builder of the Harvard Mark 1, Welch won a Shaw traveling fellowship to visit Europe's history and science museums. His last Museum project in the fall of 1987 was to develop the "On One Hand" exhibit now traveling the country as "Computers in Your Pocket."

Also a warm welcome to Tennessee native Michael Halwes, who joined us in December as Receptionist/Office Assistant. He comes to the Museum from Harvard Community Health Plan (Braintree, MA), where he processed medical records.

Photo credit: Bill Gallery

▶ *The Computer Museum is strategically located on the edge of what promises to be a dynamic new downtown area.*

New Plans will Enhance Museum Location

Some Museum Members may not realize that the Museum is strategically located on the edge of what promises to be a dynamic new downtown area. Our location will only enhance our ability to serve an ever widening constituency. A plan to extend Boston's financial district along Congress Street and across Fort Point Channel will create a new central spine from the business district to the front door of The Computer Museum.

The central artery—Boston's major north-south route—is being put underground and a new tunnel to Logan International Airport is being built. These two projects will establish easier, faster access into and out of Boston. The 8-year construction period, scheduled to begin in 1991, will be a challenge, but the Museum will work with the city and the state to maintain access during any period of disruption.

The largest undeveloped parcel of waterfront property in the city, Fan Piers, lies just north of Museum Wharf, and today is largely a sea of parked cars. Its future development will bring the epicenter of the city closer to us.

In addition, The Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority is proposing new ways to bring public transportation even closer to our door. The new water shuttle service to the airport, for example, is only five minutes away.

All of this presents a future full of challenges involving access, parking, public information and signage, but even greater opportunities.

The Museum has a prime waterfront location in an international gateway city. It is in the heart of a major center for high technology research and business. With your continued help, we'll work to improve what we already do, we'll blaze a few new trails, and we'll meet the future with the resources to turn these challenges to The Computer Museum's advantage.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Cashen
Executive Director

The Computer Museum *NEWS* (March/April 1989) **Contributors:** Gwen Bell, Joseph F. Cashen, Michael Chertok, Valerie Freitas, Robert Gates, Linda Holekamp, Mark Hunt, Kathy Keough, Tom Restivo, Jane Dusza Stanhope, Oliver Strimpel, Greg Welch. **Editor:** Gail Jennes **Staff Photographer:** Linda Holekamp **Design Directors:** Carol Lasky, Rochelle Seltzer **Design & Layout:** DesignSystems. The Computer Museum *NEWS* is published six times per year by The Computer Museum, Museum Wharf, 300 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210, (617) 426-2800. The *NEWS* is complimentary with Museum membership. Printing courtesy of Cigna Systems.

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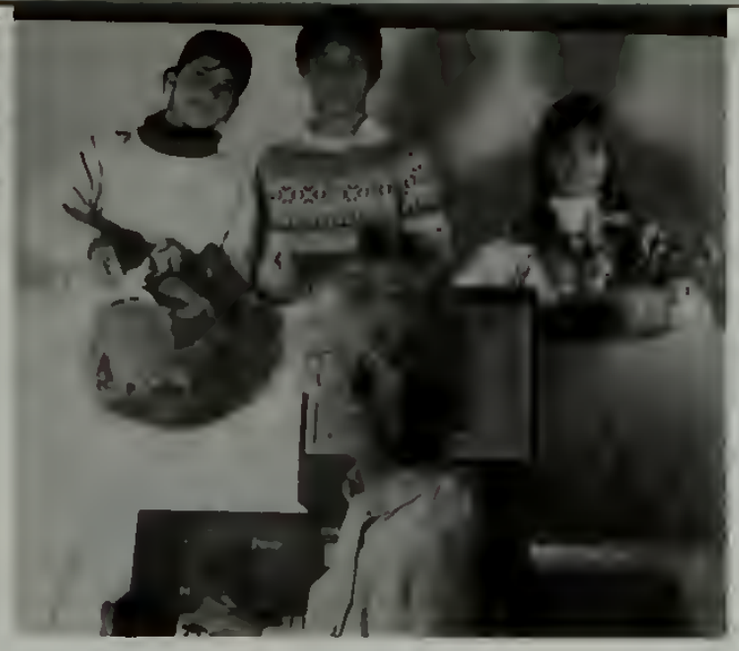


▲
Three kids enjoy "treasures within their reach" with their grandmother at the Museum's new telecommunications exhibit.

"Treasures Within Your Reach"

Research a term paper without setting foot in a library? Book a trip to Disneyworld, including plane and hotel reservations—without making 15 different phone calls? It's as easy as playing with a computer keyboard at The Computer Museum's new telecommunications exhibit, opening April 1, 1989. The workstations will be located on the 5th floor and will include access to the CompuServe family of databases, among others.

Within moments, you can log in and read the latest AP news story, shop at Bloomingdale's, or "chat" with a hacker in Peoria. Telecommunications makes it all possible, using a modem, a device that enables the personal computer to "talk" with computers in other locations.

The new exhibit is part of "Treasures Within Your Reach," a series of special exhibits and events sponsored by Museums of Boston in April.

Museum Takes On Time-Life Project

Time-Life Books has asked Founding President Gwen Bell and new Exhibits Developer Greg Welch to help compile a comprehensive time-line for the master index volume of its 24-volume set of books, *Understanding Computers*. The time-line of topics and events will run for the length of the last volume.

A valuable research tool for the history of computing, the time-line dovetails with Welch's development of the Museum's new "Milestones of Computing" exhibit. Complete with references, it will also provide the Museum with a basis for an ongoing master time-line database.

Photo credit: Jan Van Steenwyk

Tom on Tom

◀ *Computer artist Tom Norton (sitting in foreground) took video footage of Museum Exhibits Specialist Tom Merrill (standing), which he stored in an Inovion (graphics-dedicated) computer in still form. He then manipulated the image to create his portrait of Merrill, and produced prints on a Polaroid FreezeFrame. Norton was one of the artists who worked at the Museum last December in a series of holiday activities offered by Museum.*

Museum Co-sponsors National Contest

The Computer Museum has joined The Acer Group, a multinational group of computer companies, to sponsor a national competition for computer journalists, called Excellence in Technology Communications 1989.

"Journalists play a key role in the all-important educational process occurring between technical specialists and the vast audience of people whose lives are affected by computer technology," said the Museum's Director of Education Adeline Naiman. "We are honored and excited to be part of this program to recognize their achievements."

Articles of 500 words minimum, published from August 1, 1988, to July 1, 1989, are eligible. There are two categories: trade or specialized computer publications and general business publications. The winner in both categories will receive a grand prize of $2,500 or the Acer 1100, a 386-based desktop computer, at an awards ceremony in the fall of 1989.

The contest judges are: Grant (Skip) Bushee, Executive Vice-President, InfoCorp; Paul B. Carroll, Technology Reporter, *The Wall Street Journal*; Nora Georgas, Editor, *PC Computing*; Bill Laberis, Editor-in-Chief, *Computerworld*; Fred Langa, Editor-in-Chief, *Byte*; Jonathan B. Levine, San Francisco Bureau Manager, *Business Week*; Ronald Lovell, Associate Professor of Journalism, Oregon State University; John Maguire, Program Chairman, Boston University; James J. Mitchell, Business Editor, *San Jose Mercury News*; Randall L. Murray, Professor of Journalism, California Polytechnic State University; Stevens S. Ross, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University; Jonathan Rotenberg, President, The Boston Computer Society; Stephen E. Scrupski, Editor-in-Chief, *Electronic Design*; Stan Soffin, Chairman, School of Journalism, Michigan State University; John W. (Jack) Wilson, Vice-President, Business & Technology Analysis, Dataquest.

From the Store:

"Softwear" For Spring

As you peel off the winter layers, why not invest in imaginative "softwear" from The Computer Museum Store? This spring, the Store offers lively t-shirts to suit everyone's taste. And remember, Museum members get 10 percent off.

The intrepid hacker, for example, can write with a light on the front of a genuinely interactive Neovideo T-shirt. It glows green like a monitor in the dark.

Loyal Museum fans might enjoy one of our own Museum T-Shirt designs—white with colorful blue and green images of people and computers in all shapes and sizes. There's also the Museum's Computer Bowl T-shirt, a colorful memento of the world's greatest computer trivia contest.

If you like wearing your sense of humor, how about a t-shirt sporting a "Caution, I Byte" logo?

To place an order, call the Store 10am-5pm Tuesday-Friday at (617) 426-2800, extension 307.

The Computer Museum Bowl

▶ *The Computer Museum Store has great "softwear" for spring.*

MEET THE BOARD

Edward A. Schwartz:

A Museum "Founding Father" Helps Map Future

At every important point in The Computer Museum's history, Edward A. Schwartz Esq. has been there, giving the Museum the benefit of his legal knowledge, communications skills, and "good business sense." Digital Equipment Corporation's first General Counsel, he helped guide it from a $38 million venture to an $11 billion corporation. Now retired from Digital, he devotes much of his time and energy to the Museum, one of a select group of institutions he chooses to advise.

He helped advise the Museum on becoming non-profit, joining the original Board of Directors. In 1984, he played a critical part in drawing up the lease for the Museum Wharf building.

As Chairman of the Museum's Executive Committee, Schwartz plans to help shape the Museum's future.

Photo credit: Linda Hoiekamp

▲ *From the beginning, Edward A. Schwartz has played a giant role in the Museum's evalution. In addition to serving as Executive Committee Chairman, he currently represents The Computer Museum on the Museum Wharf Board.*

What is your role as Chairman?

The Executive Committee represents the entire Board of Directors in between their quarterly meetings, setting the direction for management and being available for advice on an as needed basis. My function is to lead that Committee to successfully attain its goals. I also try to complement the technical computer expertise of the Museum staff with my business/law orientation.

What is it about the Museum that excites you?

It's seeing it grow and mature as a living entity from an artifact museum to an interactive one. It's like nurturing a child into adulthood when he contributes to society. What turns me on is finding new ways to make computing understandable to people. I see each exhibit as part of that mission.

Why did you get involved?

I appreciated the originality of the concept of a computer museum and the need for a repository of computing history and knowledge. I believed in the founders and what they were doing. I still do.

What do you see for the future?

In the next five to 10 years, we need to attract more and more capable and committed people as staff, management, and financial backers to help thrust the Museum into orbit as a mature, stable organization. That is the challenge as I see it.

N Days And Counting...

To sharpen your wits in preparation for the Second Annual Computer Bowl in 1990, the January/February *NEWS* tried to stump you with this technological teaser:

What personal computer entrepreneur has been knighted? The answer is...

Sir Clive Sinclair.

Here's the next one:

Which high tech center has a higher divorce rate— Silicon Valley or Boston's Rte. 128 area?

Look for the answer in the May/June *NEWS*.

A Day in the Life...

An important mission of The Computer Museum is to make computers accessible to people. Each day, our Museum interpreters, a team of a dozen "hands-on teachers," do just that.

"We want to bring a human face to technology," says Collections Assistant/Floor Manager Tom Restivo. After polling his colleagues recently, Restivo described a typical day in the life of an interpreter:

"Before the doors open at 10:00 a.m., I'm in my red vest and have brought 60 hands-on exhibits in our galleries to life. I head downstairs to greet a group of 7th-graders from Medford. During our tour of the historical galleries, I contrast the AN/FSQ-7's huge pieces of hardware with today's small desktop computer.

"The kids laugh when I show them where the SAGE's radar operators scrawled secret messages to enliven their work shifts.

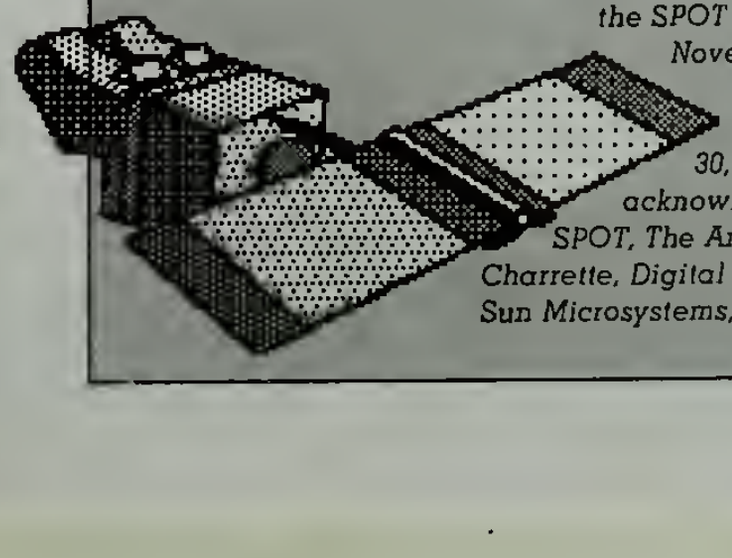
"Today, many other schools have booked tours—a Waltham, MA, high-school, a middle school in Mattapan, a New York college, and a school for the deaf in Cambridge. I show a fourth-grader how to program Fred, the computer 'mouse,' out of a maze. A teacher says, 'I must bring my girls here. They would spend all day.' In the Smart Machines Gallery, a special-needs student revels in mastering the movements of a robot by remote control."

Trained to help the public make the most of their visit, interpreters like Tom build bridges between people and our interactive exhibits.

Photo credit: Linda Hoiekamp

Terra Firma in Focus

From the left: Curator Oliver Strimpel, Robert Brammer of The Analytic Sciences Corporation, Robert Glorioso of Digital Equipment Corporation, and David S. Julyan of SPOT Image Corporation enjoy "Terra Firma in Focus: The Art and Science of Digital Satellite Imagery." They joined 200 Museum Members and guests at the SPOT opening reception last November. The exhibition of stunning digital imagery has been extended through May 30, 1989. The Museum gratefully acknowledges the major support of SPOT, The Analytic Sciences Corporation, Charrette, Digital Equipment Corporation, Pixar, Sun Microsystems, Inc., and Watzman + Keyes.



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Peggy J Hockman
E.M. Howey
Clayton T Hunt
Ilene V. Kanoff
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Vodim Maystrovsky
Mark Meehl
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Anne Millbrooke
Glen T. Miller
Christopher Mullendore
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Jerry Paul
Carl E. "Rick"Pearson
Deborah Peterson
Alan Pisaro
Mark de solla Price
George Ramanski
David S Rapaport
M. Dawn Reger
Carols & Angela Reyes
Victor A. Riley
R.A. Rizzo
George Romanski
David Rosenzweig
Marianne Ruelle
Richard R. Ruopp
Toby Sanders
Patricia Schreima
J. Sam Slicer
Clayton G. Smith
Howard A. Speilman
Patricia Sprouse
Prudence Starkweather
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Erwin Tomash
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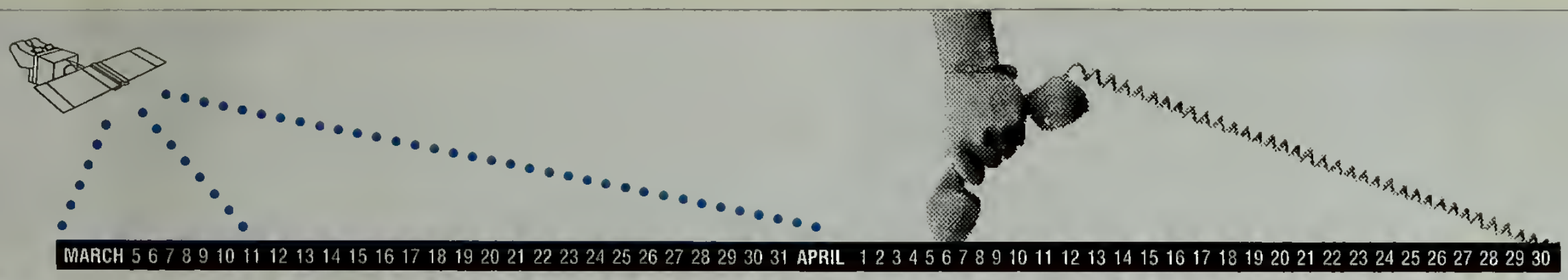
Maurice Wilkes

New Members

(under $100) November and December 1988

David Aaron
Stan & Barbara Adler
A.N. Allen
Yoginer Anand



UPCOMING EVENTS

1 EXHIBIT

Through May 30, 1989
"Terra Firma in Focus: The Art and Science of Digital Salellite Imagery"
Tour the Earth from the "eye" of the French satellite SPOT. View spectacular digital images — the sharpest now available to the public — taken from more than 500 miles in space. In the William C. Norris Gallery.

5 LECTURE

Sunday, March 5, 1989: 3 pm
"Compuler Sound Illusions: A Musical Resource For Now and the Future"
French composer and acoustic researcher Jean-Claude Risset explores how computers can change sounds and create extraordinary new ones, including illusions and paradoxes, such as pitches that seem to go up and down at the same time (the auditory equivalent of Escher's "cascade" illusion). Presentation illustrated with sound examples. Risset is now composer in residence at the MIT Media Laboratory. In the auditorium. Sponsored by the Mass. Council on the Arts and Humanities.

1 EXHIBIT

Starting April 1, 1989
(including Boston school vacation holidays)
"Treasures Within Your Reach" Put the world at your fingertips at a hands-on, state-of-the-art telecommunications station that enables you to "talk" to pals across the country, get the latest news and weather, even shop at Bloomingdale's! Designed for people of all ages (as part of Boston's Museum Goers Month). See story page 3.

16 WORKSHOP

Sunday, April 16, 1989: 10am-1 pm
"Build Your Own Robol Workshop"
Share a high tech adventure with your child or a young friend (age 10 to 15). Robot building kits available at the Museum Store. Kit is $36.95 (members $33.26). Workshop (including all tools and batteries) $15 per team; Museum members, $10. Please register early! SPACE IS LIMITED TO 30 TEAMS OF (1) ADULT AND (1) CHILD. Each child must have an adult partner and a kit. TO REGISTER: Call the Store (617) 426-2800, extension 307. Tuesday-Sunday 10am-5 pm, Friday until 9 pm. Credit cards accepted.

29 EXHIBIT

April 29-30 1989: (Weekend 11am-4pm) "SIGGRAPH FESTIVAL" Back by popular demand, the 1988 SIGGRAPH Film Show. A spectacular 90 minute selection of the best state-of-the-art computer graphics and animation from around the world. Continuous shows in the auditorium.

WINTER HOURS: Visit The Computer Museum Tuesday-Sunday, 10am to 5pm (Fridays until 9pm). Closed Monday except Boston schaol holidays and vacations. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Public tours Saturday and Sunday at 1:30 and 3pm. Summer haurs: daily.

ADMISSION: Adults $5.00, students and elders $4.00. Half price Friday evenings. Free to Museum members and children under five.

For mare information, call our talking computer at **(617)423-6758.**

MUSEUM TO HOST 1989 SIGGRAPH ART SHOW! Read about it in the May-June *NEWS*

To Join:

Members get free admission for one year; The Computer Museum *NEWS*, a bi-monthly newsletter of Museum activities; the *Annual*, a richly illustrated journal of computer history; invitations to exhibit previews and member-only events; advance notice of exhibitions and lectures; a 10% discount on purchases over $5 in The Computer Museum Store; and the opportunity to buy admission pass booklets at significant savings.

Individual Memberships	**Family Memberships**	**Contributing Memberships**
☐ $30 One-year	☐ $45 One-yeor	☐ $500 Donor
☐ $50 Two-yeor	☐ $80 Two-year	☐ $250 Sponsor
☐ $20 One-year student		☐ $100 Friend

Yes, sign me up! My check, payable to The Computer Museum, is eoclosed in the amount of $_____

Or, charge my ☐ MasterCard, ☐ Visa, ☐ American Express.

Card# _____ Expirotion Date _____ Signature _____

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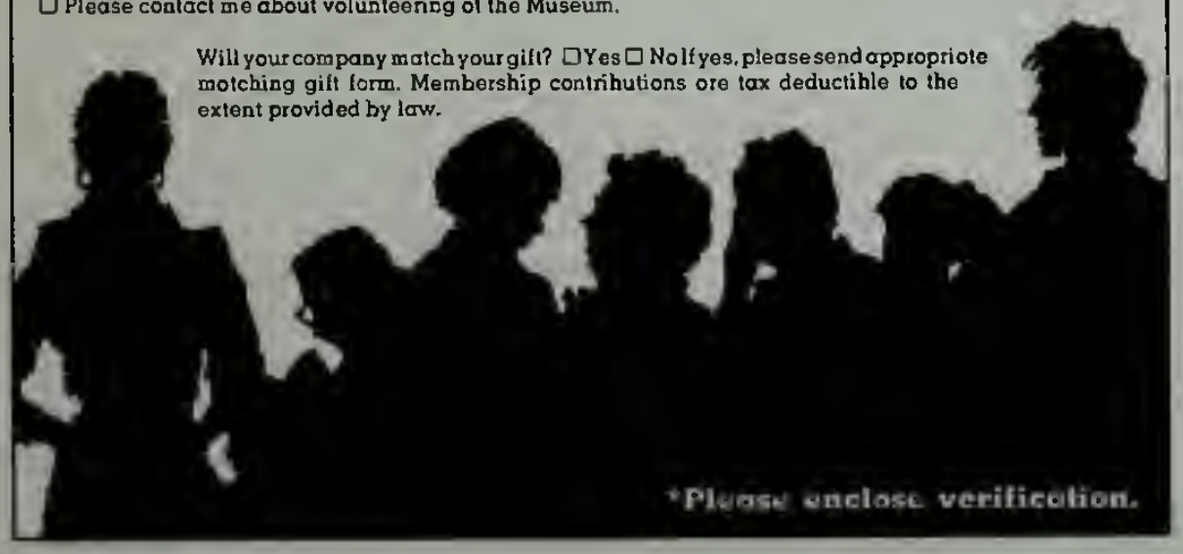
☐ Please contact me about volunteering ot the Museum.

Will your company match your gift? ☐Yes ☐ No If yes, please send appropriate matching gift form. Membership contrihutions ore tax deductihle to the extent provided by law.



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